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FOR AF/E MURRAY

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: PREL, SO, US
SUBJECT: VISIT OF MR. DOUGLAS COE TO SOMALIA

1. FROM NOVEMBER 22-26 DOUGLAS COE, AN ASSOCIATE OF THE NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST MOVEMENT, AND RUDOLF DECKER CDU MEMBER OF A STATE PARLIAMENT FROM STUTTGART, WERE IN MOGADISHU AS THE GUESTS OF PRESIDENT SIAD. COE, WHO TOLD US THAT HE HAS CLOSE ASSOCIATIONS WITH SENATOR GRASSLEY AND CONGRESSMAN BONKER, CAME TO SOMALIA IN THE COURSE OF AN EXTENSIVE TRIP TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA. DECKER AND HE PROCEEDED FROM HERE TO NAIROBI AND ZANZIBAR. WHILE IN MOGADISHU, THEY STAYED AT PRESIDENT SIAD'S GUEST HOUSE AT VILLA SOMALIA. PRESIDENT SIAD, FOREIGN MINISTER JAMA BARRE AND OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS MET WITH THEM DURING THE EVENING OF NOVEMBER 24, AS THE SOMALI HIJACKING CRISIS WAS GOING ON, AND COE SAW PRESIDENT SIAD ALONE AGAIN ON NOVEMBER 25 BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR NAIROBI.

2. COE MET WITH CHARGE AND AID DIRECTOR ON NOVEMBER 23 AT THE RESIDENCE OF MARTIN FLORIN AND AGAIN AT THE EMBASSY ON NOVEMBER 25 FOLLOWING HIS INITIAL MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SIAD. COE DESCRIBED THE OBJECTIVE OF HIS VISIT AS THE CONTINUATION OF PREVIOUS CONTACTS BETWEEN PRESIDENT SIAD IN MOGADISHU AND WASHINGTON WITH MEMBERS OF THE PRAYER BREAKFAST MOVEMENT. SENATOR GRASSLEY AND CONGRESSMAN BONKER ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN ESTABLISHING CONTACT AT THE OFFICIAL AND PERSONAL LEVEL WITH LEADERS OF SMALLER AFRICAN COUNTRIES SUCH AS SOMALIA. (NOTE: AS DEPARTMENT KNOWS, SENATOR GRASSLEY HAS MET WITH PRESIDENT SIAD AND HAD PLANNED TO COME HERE THIS SUMMER). COE SAID THAT PRESIDENT SIAD WAS VERY RESPONSIVE TO MORE PERSON-TO-PERSON CONTACTS WITH MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS, THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH AND THE BUSINESS

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COMMUNITY.

4. COE SAID THAT ED STANLEY, THE PRESIDENT OF THE YOUNG PRESIDENTS ORGANIZATION (YPO), HAD DISCUSSED WITH HIM THE POSSIBILITY OF A VISIT TO SOMALIA EITHER ALONE OR WITH A SMALL GROUP OF PROMINENT YOUNGER US BUSINESS LEADERS. THE CHARGE AND AID DIRECTOR INDICATED THAT FE JS MISSION WOULD WELCOME PRIVATE EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH CLOSER RELATIONS BETWEEN SOMALIA AND THE UNITED STATES. THEY ADVISED THAT AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN, HOWEVER, SHOULD UNDERSTAND THE COMPLEXITIES OF DOING BUSINESS IN SOMALIA AND NOT COME WITH UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS. WE ENCOURAGED COE LN LSCUSSIONS WITH MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS AND BUSINESSMEN TO URGE THAT THEY DISCUSS ANY PROPOSED TRAVEL PLANS TO SOMALIA WITH CHRIS MURRAY ON OUR SOMALIA DESK. THE DEPARTMENT COULD THEN INFORM THE EMBASSY AND ALSO PROVIDE PRELIMINARY BRIEFINGS AND OTHER INFORMATION. COE WAS INITIALLY SKEPTICAL ABOUT TURNING TO THE DEPARTMENT BUT FINALLY CONCURRED WITH US THAT THIS WAS THE RIGHT WAY TO PROCEED.
HIRSCH
END OF MESSAGE

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